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Fiction Supplement.

SATURDAY : 8 NOVEMBER, 1902.

Twelve Months' Fiction.

In sifting and assessing the mass of fiction which has appeared since our last special Fiction Number, twelve months ago, we have decided this year to abolish that literary compromise which usually influences the annual marshalling of the novelists' productions, and frankly to divide the year's production into two parts. It would be idle to deny that a novel by, say, Mr. Anthony Hope or Mr. H. S. Merriman is a book of the year. It must appear in any catalogue of the year, not only because the approval of a large majority of educated persons has given it importance, but also because it is a thoroughly capable, careful, and perhaps brilliant piece of invention and of writing. On the other hand, it would be equally idle to assert that "The Velvet Glove" or "The Intrusions of Peggy" has any real vital connection with the art of fiction, that it "counts," or that it would pass muster with, or even interest, the expert opinion of a foreign country. Every competent judge knows that it would not, and is perfectly assured that in a few years it is destined to oblivion and will be as though it had never been. Such books as those we have named, despite their skilful and honest excellence, partake of the nature of a commercial article. Consciously or unconsciously they meet a market, they are according to a pattern. They lack the distinction of mind, the seriousness, the truthfulness, and above all the fundamental emotional force which every true work of art must possess. The majority, even the educated majority, cannot perceive these shortcomings, or if they perceive them they cannot estimate their significance.

We have selected six popular novels of the year as being the best of their sort. We use the term popular in a moderate and decent sense—a sense which does not include the too-assertive vogue of books like "Temporal Power," by Marie Corelli; "Fuel of Fire," by Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler; and the "Hound of the Baskervilles," by Sir Conan Doyle. Such works as these have no artistic recommendation of any kind: they appeal to the possibly harmless instincts of the populace in the same way as a halfpenny paper does, and it would be ridiculous to pit them against the well-bred vigour and the elaborate restrained craftsmanship of writers of the calibre of Mr. Anthony Hope or Sir Walter Besant. Our selected Popular Six are as follows:—

- "The Intrusions of Peggy." By Anthony Hope.
- "The Velvet Glove." By H. S. Merriman.
- "Scarlet and Hyssop." By E. F. Benson.
- "The Conquest of Charlotte." By D. S. Meldrum.
- "No Other Way." By Sir Walter Besant.
- "The Right of Way." By Sir Gilbert Parker.

Of these it is not necessary to say much. We have endeavoured to place them in order of merit. There can be no doubt that Sir Gilbert Parker's was the least satisfactory of the lot; indeed Sir Gilbert's talent has already lost much of its first fineness, and if "The Right of Way" had sold two million instead of a mere two hundred thousand, the fact would remain that its author cannot much longer, if his present retrogression continues, be enumerated with the serious craftsmen. Mr. Meldrum's book deserves special mention; it delighted the readers of "Blackwood," no mean achievement, and it has decidedly opened a budding reputation.

Ranking after this half dozen, we must specify eight other popular and praiseworthy novels, all of which, we

opine, well merited the attention which they received. They are named in alphabetical order:—

- "The Making of a Marchioness." By F. H. Burnett.
- "Adventures of M. d'Haricot." By J. S. Clouston.
- "In the Fog." By R. H. Davis.
- "If I were King." By Justin H. McCarthy.
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- "The Credit of the County." By W. E. Norris.
- "A Mystery of the Sea." By Bram Stoker.

Mr. W. E. Norris continues to produce excellent work of its kind, work which will not offend the nicest palate, though of course it may be accused of insipidity. Mr. Bram Stoker, in "A Mystery of the Sea," did not repeat the extraordinary success of that really clever "shocker," "Dracula"; but he produced what may be called "a good story." Mr. Richard Harding Davis, in "In the Fog," showed Sir Conan Doyle and Messrs. Pemberton, Marsh, Le Queux, Donovan, and Co., how well a detective story can be done by a capable hand. "The Adventures of M. d'Haricot" offers an example of a rather obvious, popular facetiousness just kept within the bounds of literary respectability. The book was neither original in plan nor very ingenious in execution, but it had a certain tact. Mrs. Meade's "Drift," which we understand to be the result of an attempt on the part of that popular author to get for once out of the groove and write to satisfy herself, was a story which wins respect for its honesty of purpose, but which is far more interesting as a psychological key to the brain-processes of Mrs. Meade than as a serious novel.

Of the innumerable company of Adeline Sergeants, S. R. Crocketts, Max Pembertons, B. M. Crokers, and other firm pillars of the circulating library, we need not discourse. We have noticed, however, that while Miss Adeline Sergeant's amazing fecundity seems to increase, Mr. S. R. Crockett's production shows a laudable tendency towards moderation.

We come now to the Artistic Novels of the year, those which do "count," and those which could not fail to interest any instructed foreign student of our literature. They are in alphabetical order, according to the authors' names:—

- "Anna of the Five Towns." By Arnold Bennett.
- "The Labyrinth." By R. Murray Gilchrist.
- "Love and the Soul Hunters." By John Oliver Hobbes.
- "The Wings of the Dove." By Henry James.
- "Love with Honour." By Charles Marriott.
- "The Hole in the Wall." By Arthur Morrison.
- "The Success of Mark Wyngate." By U. S. Silberrad.
- "The First Men in the Moon." By H. G. Wells.
- "The Valley of Decision." By Edith Wharton.

In making this selection, we have entirely ignored the question of popularity or even of reputation. We have been guided solely by our artistic judgment. We put forward these nine novels as in our view the best of the year—in technique, in emotional power, and in the achievement of beauty. That the average opinion will disagree, will possibly be startled, we do not doubt, for it is a commonplace of literary history that the average opinion, though seldom contemptible, is never exactly right until it has had about fifty years in which to ripen and correct itself. All these ten novels are artistically notable, and some, we imagine, deserve a more distinguished adjective. Mr. Murray Gilchrist's "The Labyrinth" was a fine example of the true romantic spirit working free from the trammels of any realism; its sensuous and virile charm, and the strange audacity of its close will be remembered. In "Love and the Soul Hunters" Mrs. Craigie furnished another instance, perhaps more ambitious and elaborate than any previous one, of her rare power of combining sensuous and intellectual subtlety, and again combining these with a view of life at once comprehensive and feminine. The "Wings of the Dove" was a great

achievement of virtuosity, but we shall not attempt to minimise the essential artistic arrogance of Mr. James's attitude towards his readers. We incline to the view that "The First Men in the Moon," in its fusion of picturesquely imagination, scientific truth, and philosophic criticism of this planet, must rank as Mr. Wells's best novel. It has been very well received in France, and we cannot forbear to comment on the irregular and piquant fact that a narrative which satisfied the readers of "The Strand Magazine" should happen to be good art.

A comparatively large number of second-class serious or genuinely humorous novels deserve particular reference, but we must be content with merely naming a round score, roughly in order of artistic importance:—

- "The River." By Eden Phillpotts.
- "The Sea-Lady." By H. G. Wells.
- "Sordon." By Benjamin Swift.
- "The Westcotes." By "Q."
- "The Conqueror." By Gertrude Atherton.
- "The Way of Escape." By Graham Travers.
- "Woodsid Farm." By Mrs. W. K. Clifford.
- "The Mating of a Dove." By Mary I. Mann.
- "The Founding of Fortunes." By Jane Barlow.
- "The Keys of the House." By Algernon Gissing.
- "Donna Diana." By Richard Bagot.
- "The Lady Paramount." By Henry Harland.
- "At Sunwich Port." By W. W. Jacobs.
- "Patricia of the Hills." By C. K. Burrow.
- "The Four Feathers." By A. E. W. Mason.
- "Felix." By Robert Hichens.
- "Luke Delmege." By Father Sheehan.
- "The Happenings of Jill." By "Iota."
- "Sons of the Sword." By Margaret L. Woods.
- "Paul Kelver." By Jerome K. Jerome.

This list of volumes of short stories is rather notable:—

- "Natives of Milton." By R. Murray Gilchrist.
- "The Lady of the Barge." By W. W. Jacobs.
- "The White Wolf." By "Q."
- "Just So Stories." By Rudyard Kipling.
- "A Book of Stories." By G. S. Street.
- "The Watcher by the Threshold." By John Buchan.
- "Joe Wilson." By Henry Lawson.
- "The Place of Dreams." By William Barry.
- "The Handsome Quaker." By Katherine Tynan.
- "On the Old Trail." By Bret Harte.

Of new books by new authors, only two can be said to arouse interest:—

- "Wistons." By Miles Amber.
- "The Sheepstealers." By Violet Jacobs.

"Wistons" was unequal. The beginning showed much promise.

Lastly, we give a list of the powerful translations of the year. It is regrettable that Maxim Gorki stands in danger of being overdone; his talent and fertility are indubitable:—

- "Forma Gordyeff." By Maxim Gorki.
- "Malva and the Orloff Couple." By Maxim Gorki.
- "Three of Them" (twice). By Maxim Gorki.
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- "The Forerunner." By D. Merejkowski.
- "The Depths of Deliverance." By F. van Eeden.

Upon the whole, we may say, a highly respectable fictional year, but scarcely of striking brilliance. Among its leading features we note, not without satisfaction, the further decline of the moribund fashionable historical novel. In this connection we ought to mention Mrs. Atherton's spirited and admirable attempt to inaugurate a new historical convention in "The Conqueror." We have ceased to expect work from either Mr. Meredith or Mr. Hardy, but we have the right to say

that no year is complete without novels by Mr. Joseph Conrad and Mr. George Gissing. The untimely deaths of one of the most promising novelists of England and one of the most promising novelists in America—George Douglas Brown and Frank Norris—have unhappily to be recorded.

OUR PLÉBISCITE.

Two weeks ago our Competition took the form of a request for the titles of the twelve best novels published this year. The prize, we stated, would be awarded to the sender of the list which most nearly answered to the general opinion as determined by a plébiscite. Excluding the novels that received less than four votes, the result is as follows:—

Plébiscite List.	Votes.
LOVE AND THE SOUL HUNTERS	83
THE VULTURES	80
TEMPORAL POWER	69
THE INTRUSIONS OF PEGGY	66
FUEL OF FIRE	59
THE LADY PARAMOUNT	46
THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES	41
AUDREY	38
LOVE WITH HONOUR	37
THE RIVER	31
SCARLET AND HYSSOP	30
THE SEA LADY	30
 PAUL KELVER	25
THE LITTLE WHITE BIRD	25
WINGS OF THE DOVE	25
AT SUNWICH PORT	25
THE WAY OF ESCAPE	24
FELIX	17
THE SUCCESS OF MARK WYNGATE	16
THE HOLE IN THE WALL	12
KING'S BYWAYS	11
THE NEW CHRISTIANS	10
THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE	9
THE SHEEPSTEALERS	9
THE CONQUEROR	9
DONOVAN PASHA	8
MYSTERY OF THE SEA	8
NO OTHER WAY	8
FOUR FEATHERS	7
NEBO THE NAILER	7
THE VALLEY OF DECISION	7
IF I WERE KING	6
THE WISTONS	6
CECILIA	5
DONNA DIANA	5
THE ETERNAL CITY	4
ANNA OF THE FIVE TOWNS	4
A BAYNARD FROM BENGAL	4
THE WESTCOTES	4

No fewer than five competitors selected ten of the twelve books mentioned in the Plébiscite List. Their names are Miss Rachel Hankinson, Manchester; Mr. W. J. Fuller, Manchester; Mr. E. Mackie, Clacton-on-Sea; Miss C. Ashley, Weybridge; Mr. A. Cameron, Paisley. As it would be hardly worth while to divide a guinea into five parts, we propose to send to each of the winners a copy of one of the novels mentioned in the Plébiscite List. Will the winners be so good as to inform us which of the twelve novels we may send them.

It should be remembered that in a competition of this kind the popularity of novels as distinct from their literary value is certain to be taken into consideration by competitors, who, with a prize in view, feel themselves bound to consider the probable selections of the whole body of competitors.

New Novels.

THE HOUSEWIVES OF EDENRISE. By Florence Popham. (Heinemann. 6s.)

MRS. POPHAM's name is new to us, but whether "The Housewives of Edenrise" is, or is not, a first book, it deserves praise and welcome. As may be gathered from the title, the story is of a domestic nature and meddles not with the high passions. Edenrise is a suburb forty-five minutes from London, its houses pleasantly grouped about a village green, and its housewives pleasantly interested in one another's affairs. The book chronicles many of their sayings and a few of their doings, and in particular the influence upon them, in various ways, of a lady-immigrant with a dubious past. The thing is achieved with perfect naturalness and simplicity; there is no trace of a desire to inflate the importance of the theme, or to read into it qualities which it does not obviously possess. It is a suburban and rather trivial tale, and Mrs. Popham faces this fact with an unaffected sangfroid which, in the end, and throughout, makes for artistic righteousness. Her plot is fundamentally weak, facile, and inadequate, and the book is less a novel than a series of sketches; it lacks the dramatic quality which any novel that is a novel should possess. Instead of having a story to tell and clothing that story with the results of her observations of life, Mrs. Popham has, we think, merely concocted a story in order to exploit her observations. Having brought this certainly somewhat serious charge, we have nothing else but praise for the book. The narrative is skilful, the writing in quite admirable taste, the sentiment never degenerates into sentimentality; and everywhere a wise and witty individuality is disclosed. Besides being effectively homogeneous in complete scenes, the book is full of good things. "One has to tell so many untruths in order to convey a really truthful impression." "Well, no, I should not call her good-tempered. But then no really capable person is." "There are no poor in Edenwise, or at any rate none who are church-goers." And so on—we could make dozens of quotations. We have read "The Housewives of Edenwise" with relish, and we shall look forward to its successor.

THE SENTIMENTAL WARRIOR. By Edgar Jepson. (Grant Richards. 6s.)

A NEW book by Mr. Jepson possesses elements of excitement which the average novel has not. The reader is like a grown-up person in the presence of a precocious child, unaware from moment to moment what disconcerting statement is to be uttered next. For Mr. Jepson brings to his fiction a peculiar and bewildering disregard of the customary definitions of right or wrong, moral or immoral. It would appear as if to him these things did not exist; as if the words moral or non-moral had no meaning. The Nietzsche theory of strength of will as the highest virtue has never been more easily and naturally presented; all Mr. Jepson's heroes do despicable or criminal things with instinctive unconsciousness and unconcern.

In "The Sentimental Warrior," it is true, the hero Julian is less of an *enfant terrible* than some of his predecessors. But he is a study of the born instinctive criminal, nevertheless—the criminal not by accident, but by temperament, the criminal whose ethical obtuseness realises no obstruction except that of incapacity. All Julian's methods are those the average decent man would avoid, and his descent to burglary, though it is unnecessary to the plot, is psychologically an almost inevitable development of character. What the sensations of the average reader will be to find the "burglarious" jeweller, destitute of even one moment's righteous remorse, marrying the charming and irreproachable Lady Bovingdon, it is

difficult to say. But the book is an excellently written study of an abnormal but existing type of character, and but for a certain feebleness in the treatment of the feminine element, would have stood well above the mass of average autumn fiction.

MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH. By Alice Caldwell Hegan. (Hodder and Stoughton. 5s.)

THE comic and the pathetic are inextricably mixed in this very human and agreeable little American book, which in certain ways is the lineal descendant of the *Christmas Carol*, and should find readers among all those who like that class of story when the evenings draw in and the butchers' shops begin to dazzle. Mrs. Wiggs is a brave widow with several children, who meets every hardship with philosophy and an optimistic front that Dr. Pangloss might have envied. Misfortune after misfortune comes, but prosperity smiles as the curtain drops. That is the scheme of the book, which would be not many removes from a tract were it not for its raciness and high spirits. The account of the doctoring of the sick horse, of which we quote a small portion, is true humour:—

The crowd which had collected to see the horse shot began to disperse, for it was supper-time, and there was nothing to see now but the poor suffering animal, with Billy Wiggs patiently sitting on its head.

When Mrs. Wiggs returned she carried a bottle, and what appeared to be a large marble. "This here is a calomel pill," she explained. "I jes' rolled the calomel in with some soft, light bread. Now, you prop his jaw open with a little stick, an' I'll shove it in, an' then hole his head back while I pour down some water an' turkentine outen this bottle."

It was with great difficulty that this was accomplished, for the old horse had evidently seen a vision of the happy hunting-ground, and was loath to return to the sordid earth. His limbs were already stiffening in death, and the whites of his eyes only were visible. Mrs. Wiggs noted these discouraging symptoms, and saw that violent measures were necessary.

"Gether some sticks an' build a fire quick as you kin. I've got to run over home. Build it right up clos to him, Billy; we've got to git him het up."

Through the long night they worked with their patient, and when the first glow of morning appeared in the east, a triumphant procession wended its way across the Cabbage Patch. First came an old woman bearing sundry pails, kettles, and bottles; next came a very sleepy little boy, leading a trembling old horse, with soup all over its head, tallow on its feet, and a strip of rag-carpet tied about its middle.

Another story—of two lovers and a misunderstanding—is intertwined with that of the Wiggs family, but we cannot admit to having viewed it in any light but as an interruption.

MOTHER EARTH. By Frances Harrod (Frances Forbes-Robertson). (Heinemann. 6s.)

The title "Mother Earth" promises rather more than this book performs. The psychological possibilities of a novel dealing with human nature close to the soil, and to the freedom of out-door life are great, but Mrs. Harrod hardly makes the most of them. She has the usual kind of story to tell, and her characters are not at all uncommon. But she has given her story a pleasant and original setting, and she brings the attractions of nature in a far-off corner of Wales picturesquely before us. She does not tell us exactly where her scene is laid, but one may make a shrewd guess at Anglesey. If the people there are really as unconventional as Trevor Griffiths and his kindly, whimsical half-sister Lady Anne Reston, the island must be rather an interesting place to live in. Trevor has had a brilliant career at Cambridge, but he can find no better means of keeping his small family estate together than by farming it himself, actually tossing his hay, and carrying his own milk from door to door. In fact, the first time

Sabrina Fairchild sees him she mistakes him for a farm-hand, and the second time for a coalheaver. All the same, she falls in love with him, and he finds himself a captive to her charm. But if he told her plainly that he loved her, there would be no book. So he lets her think that he has proposed at the instigation of Lady Anne, who wants the American heiress's dollars to restore the fallen fortunes of her house. The next move is fairly obvious. The dollars vanish. Local gossip, which had before blamed Trevor for thinking of a *mariage de convenance*, now shifts round unreasonably, as gossip will, and blames Sabrina for holding him to his bargain. The experienced novel-reader must already foresee the development. Mrs. Harrod works it out prettily enough, and the little drama of Sabrina's emotions is sketched sympathetically, and with touches of feeling that communicate to the reader the author's genuine interest in her own creations. Her story may not give us new lights on character, but it pleases by reason of the welcome change from stuffy studios, and garish town episodes, to the open sweep of the sea-shore and the quiet fragrance of country life.

UNOFFICIAL. By the Hon. Mrs. Walter R. D. Forbes. (Constable. 6s.)

WITHIN its limits Mrs. Forbes has written a good story. We have to accept its conventions and to reconcile ourselves to its improbabilities—but they are such conventions and improbabilities as seem inherent in books dealing with plot, counterplot, and the final triumph of the right. In places the theme is handled with more than ordinary ingenuity; the discomfiture by the Duchess of Count René de Courchamps is very neatly managed; the episode has an element of effective drama, and is not overstrained in treatment. The characters, on the whole, are alive; they talk naturally, and behave, in the somewhat unreal circumstances of the story, as reasonable beings might have behaved. That is where Mrs. Forbes succeeds in giving her story a tone which raises it above the average of its class; her people act from human motives, and they are never absurd. The weakness of the book lies in the mechanical and arbitrary removal of the heroine's rascally husband. He had to be got out of the way, but Mrs. Forbes's ingenuity should have discovered some better method than a fall and the familiar marble mantelpiece. The book concludes upon a pleasantly refreshing note, a note which suggests, indeed, that the author would find in the simple and more natural things of life material better suited for her art.

A ROMANCE OF THE TUILERIES. By Francis Gribble. (Chapman & Hall. 6s.)

THE material of the above romance has hardly substance enough to sustain the weight of so many chapters. The Second Revolution constitutes the great moment of the slender plot, which hangs upon the *mariage de convenance* of a young girl to a man considerably older than herself, and who regards her as too simple and insignificant a creature to be worth even a temporary love-making. The child, with a head on fire through romantic literature, is transported to life at the French Court, and left to develop there as best she can in a domestic loneliness as complete as if she were unmarried. She is made love to by a crazy poet, sees the new Revolution creep nearer and nearer to the unstable throne, is present at the King's hesitant abdication, and finally, in danger of her life from the howling revolutionists, is rescued by the mad poet and restored to her husband, who is himself lying concealed and wounded. Then comes reconciliation, and the mutual discovery that the previously unconscious germ of love in both has been fanned by the past hours of horror and danger into a flame of living intensity.

Unfortunately the book lacks communicating power. The reader is never wrought to an illusion of actuality. Even the chief characters remain to the end slightly vaporous and indistinct; and the analysis of the girl's development never reaches to the quick of inner personality. A certain apparent indecision also between dramatic or analytical fiction helps to lessen the effect of either, and the reader at the end is inclined to consider that, for so long foreseen a climax, rather a tumultuous excess of preliminaries have been gone through.

THE SON OF THE WOLF. By Jack London. (Isbister. 6s.)

WE notice in the advertisements of "A God of His Fathers" (a previous work of the author's) appended to the present volume, that a critic remarks: "It is no exaggeration to say that Mr. London does for the Klondyke what Mr. Rudyard Kipling has done for India." A reading of "The Son of the Wolf" leaves us with the conviction that Mr. Rudyard Kipling need be under no uneasiness. Mr. Jack London's tales are all "vigorous," his men are all muscular heroes, his language, his style, his situations all have the ideal and the downright virtues of muscularity. So far so good. But we want analysis, not deification of the muscular ideal, and that is where Mr. Jack London fails. We do not wish to disparage in any way "The Son of the Wolf." The nine tales of which the book is made up are healthy, breezy narratives of sensational incidents in the "Worthland." Scruff Mackenzie goes on the trail seeking a wife, braves a whole tribe of Indians, kills two men and carries off the beautiful Zarinska, the chief's daughter. Naass, an Alientian chief, travels thousand of miles from the Behring Sea tracking Axel Gunderson, a modern Norse Sea rover who has carried off from him the peerless Unga. Of course, he lures Gunderson and Unga to a trackless wilderness in search of a gold mine, and of course they die in the most melodramatic fashion. The best story in the book is "To the Man on the Trail," because it is the least theatrical. "In a Far Country" is a tale with the same motive as "An Outpost of Progress" by Mr. Joseph Conrad. To compare the manner in which the two authors bring the same situation before us is to see why Mr. Jack London cannot be called an artist. He is a vigorous story teller for the general public—which is not a bad thing, but his sphere scarcely touches that of those writers who, like Mr. Rudyard Kipling, have created a manner and a method of presentation which is all their own.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GRAY-HORSE TROOP. By Hamilton Garland. (Richards. 6s.)

THIS story is in essence a plea for the preservation of the weaker races, instead of the usual eulogy of the white pioneers who threaten them with extinction. The captain of the Gray-Horse Troop is an American officer who leaves his regiment to become Indian Agent in charge of the Tetongs. He is enthusiastic about his work, and the Indians are devoted to him almost from the first. To these Tetongs, the mere remnant of a once free and joyous race of hunters, is opposed the typical medley of cowboys and cattlemen to whom the once famous dictum "Good Injun dead Injun" is by no means an empty phrase. These pictures of western life are obviously the work of one who has had actual experience of the phases of life he describes. The cowboy, Calvin Streeter, blasphemous and insolent in the face of death, cynical in word and loyal in action, brow-beating a lynching mob's leader with the rage in his eye and concealing with an almost feminine modesty the subtle wound in his heart, is vividly depicted. The Indian Agent, too, is well drawn, but the story is unnecessarily prolonged. Some of the incidents are theatrical rather than dramatic in

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so much as they occur in situations improvised for the occasion, and not inevitable from the nature of life. One is disappointed, too, in Mr. Garland as a novelist of manners and customs other than those of Cowboys and Red-Indians. For example, one does not expect the most unimaginative bar-room slang from the lips of a cultivated artist who is also the daughter of an ex-senator, nor does one welcome similar verbiage at the luncheon table of that distinguished politician.

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FUEL OF FIRE. By Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler. (Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.)

MISS FOWLER'S new volume is a distinct decline from her earlier productions. The plot is slight, and its languid flow suffers periodical interruption to admit of conversations perfectly irrelevant to the subject of the story. To fulfil an ancient prophecy a certain Baxendale Hall belonging to an old if rather unattractive family has to be burnt to the ground for the third and last time. During the course of the book this happens. For a short time afterwards the hero refuses to take the insurance money, and on this account has a temporary quarrel with the somewhat sordid heroine. A German professor abruptly appears, discovers the cause of the fire, and everybody is once more made happy. Nothing but the most brilliant writing could save such inert and commonplace material, and though the book contains here and there some smart sayings, and one amusing character, it never rises to the level of serious work. It seems, in fact, as if Miss Fowler had temporarily abandoned both narrative or psychological interests for the unadulterated love of conversation, and in the zest of it had omitted to remember that long accounts of very ordinary young people's domestic chatter are not of a nature to be worth publicity. The chapters given up to the talk of Mrs. Candy, a caretaker, are the most successful portions of the book.

THE MANOR FARM. By M. E. Francis. (Longmans. 6s.) THE plot is simple, the characters are simple, the whole treatment of the story is simple to a degree rare in modern fiction. But it is a simplicity exhaling kindness, and the comfortable atmosphere of homely and cheerful matters. "The Manor Farm" rests one like a siesta on a sunny day. Emotions are never taxed in it, the problems of life are never probed, and no clumsy attempts to solve the permanently incomprehensible are presented to irritate the nerves of the reader. The style is easy, and the character drawing, if a little inclined to an excess of optimism, is not without shrewd touches. Two old farmers share the Manor Farm between them, a low wall dividing what had once been a single excellent property. The two men are cousins, and one has a son, the other a daughter. It follows that the cherished desire of both is that the young couple should marry, make the Manor Farm once more one building, and the Maidment family as formerly, of some account in the county. To assist in this proposed re-establishment of the Maidment importance, a rich maiden aunt promises to leave all her money to the young married couple. The proposed bride and bridegroom, however, disgusted at not being allowed to choose, began by cordially detesting one another. It is not until the old people have fought over them and forbidden the marriage, that they fall hopelessly in love. The final struggle with the two obstinate old farmers, both at heart longing for the match, and for general reconciliation, is excellent comedy. Neither will go back on his word, but neither is above an insinuation to the despairing lovers that a marriage without consent is perfectly legal and possible. The hint is taken, and the trembling culprits coming back to try and disarm irate parents, find the two hilariously drinking together the health of bride and bridegroom, and all disagreements forgotten, preparing an elaborate reception for the return of the runaway couple.

FROM BEHIND THE ARRAS. By Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

EVEN for a first book, as we are told it is, "From Behind the Arras" is singularly unequal in merit. It tells a capital story, and spoils it by a careless dénouement. It places its characters in an interesting period, that of the Regency in France, and gives us absolutely no local colour, nothing to show us that they were not all living in Surrey at the present time—except an occasional mention of swords and duels. This may, perhaps, stand in its favour with some readers, who are tired of the historical novel; and we can unhesitatingly assure such as these that Mrs. Champion de Crespigny's book is not an historical novel, though she has chosen to weave her plot into an historical period. It is a very human and very thrilling romance; and it would hold the interest of the most experienced novel reader right up to the point where, as we have already hinted, the novelist shatters her charming castle of bricks with her own hand. From the moment where the heroine escapes from the villains at the mill, and is whirled down the stream in a boat with a hole in it, the story becomes weak and ineffectual. It is never satisfactorily explained why no one at the château asks any questions, though the heroine is brought home, dripping with water, in the small hours of the morning, by her betrothed, after having mysteriously disappeared some days before. Now our sense of poetic justice left undisturbed by the fact that the abbé Thémire, though known to be guilty of kidnapping, attempted murder, and a few other things, escapes scot free. These are only two of the discrepancies that mar a very promising book; but there are others as well, and even the pretty conclusion on the last page cannot compensate for the way in which the story goes to pieces directly the crisis has been reached. There is something very crude, too, about

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the way in which Hortense is brought on the scenes, obviously to form a link in the chain of events, and then abruptly removed as soon as she has played her part. All this points as much to carelessness as to inexperience; and even at the risk of losing some of the freshness which is the author's chief charm, we should like to advise her to put more serious effort into her next book. It will be well worth it, if she justifies the promise shown in her first; for it is evident that she possesses both wit and invention.

IN CHAUCER'S MAYTIME. By Emily Richings. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

A PREFACE states that the book is a study of English life in the fourteenth century, and the plot is founded upon a basis of fact, being the life of Phillipa de Rouet, the wife of Geoffrey Chaucer, and that of her sister Katherine, who afterwards became the wife of John of Gaunt, and Duchess of Lancaster.

How far it is advisable to weave fantastic embroideries round a few threads of historical truth depends probably upon the success of the workmanship. In this case the result is a little lifeless and mannered. In fact, the least interesting thing in the bulky volume before us is the progress of the story. In spite of it, however, for those with an abundance of leisure, the book is not altogether undesirable reading. The picture of the age given has been built up after the most careful researches, and the interspersed descriptions of mediaeval habits and customs compensate for much dull talking. When the writer deals with old observances, and describes the fashion of keeping Christmas Day, Hallowe'en, May Day, St. John the Baptist's Eve, &c., she keeps, with an effective restraint, from all imaginative elaborations. The reader feels confident of being given historical facts minus the literary exaggerations of the author. The quotations from documents of the period also, are full of the quaint charm of long past centuries, something graceful and childlike seeming to cling to their very phraseology, as in these two orders taken from the list of the Royal Christmas presents:—

The makinge of a harness for the King's body, powdered with roses.

Five hoodes of long white cloth worked with blew men dancing.

And again in the delicate fancy of the following lines:—

Courtesie from heaven came
When Gabriel our Ladye grette
And Elizabeth with Marie mette.

WITH CLIPPED WINGS. By Mrs. Boyd. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

MRS. BOYD'S story opens in New Zealand with the conventional colonial family. We get the usual pair of charming daughters, the one home-loving, the other selfish, and affecting to despise her comfortable home. Then two naval officers come upon the scene, and after a serious flirtation with one of them, the already dissatisfied daughter persuades her father to allow her to spend a few months in England. The disillusionments of this journey are the gist of the story. Deserted before the end of the voyage by the officer who had so violently flirted with her at home, she arrives in London only to be met by a false uncle and cousin, who, taking her to a house in St. John's Wood, rob her in the night of everything she possesses, besides a sum of £400, and leave her to wake in the morning, penniless, without any clothes but a soiled travelling dress, and alone in London. Eventually she discovers her genuine uncle, and a haughty cousin Honoria, but the troubous vicissitudes of her London visit only terminate with the capture of the thief and her engagement to the second of the original naval officers. The book is briskly written, and the reader's interest in the tracing of the

St. John's Wood villain is well sustained to a fairly dramatic denouement. The character drawing is weak, but the plot, rounding to a happy conclusion, is fairly exciting and consistent.

THE DREAM AND THE MAN. By Mrs. L. Baillie Reynolds. (Murray. 2s. 6d. net.)

MRS. REYNOLDS is of the multitude who think that the edifice of Romance is all the more secure for a basement of fact. The truth is that directly the fact is clouded by pseudonyms its power to promote illusion is destroyed. Our author's protesting preface is, then, for the purpose of art so much waste paper. Her story, however, singular and fantastic though it be, lures the reader on, because it is told without any wandering to the right or left, told, in fact, with the restrained enthusiasm due to a curious anecdote.

The situation is that of a man who desires to marry any reputable and refined woman who will have him in order that she may inherit a certain property which he can only enjoy through his wife. The man once forged his father's name on a bill, and is not therefore a favourite of society. It behoves then our author—English optimist that she is—at once to keep the picturesqueness and remove the vulgarity which such a situation suggests. His marriage is to start with a mere bargain; a seamstress, afraid of the sweaters, takes a dishonoured name in return for an income. Vulgarity, alert and grimy, hovers for a pounce, but the supernatural intervenes and glamours the nuptial pair. He is the "Big Boy" of a childish interlude; her wooden horse has been his accommodating pocket's constant guest. While she lay in the sleep of want, dinner in his home supplied her feast of Tantalus, and her spirit visibly walked on a "crimson Brussels carpet." It sounds absurd, and to disclose Mrs. Reynolds' stage management would make it sound yet more absurd. We refrain, and invite the reader to see for himself how prettily the thing goes in the simple earnestness of the telling, and how womanly and charming is the dreamer despite the miracle of her dual existence.

LIFE, THE INTERPRETER. By Phyllis Bottome. (Longmans. 6s.)

MURIEL DALLERTON, an orphan with a large fortune, found society a wearisome waste of life and opportunity. She had tried to do good, "but at every turn she met with opposition,—this, that, the other was 'not nice,'—not 'the proper thing,'" and in consequence she goes to live among factory hands in Stepney, doing what little good she can among a class badly in need of substantial as well as spiritual assistance.

She is in love, however, with a certain weak and worldly Captain Hurstly, whom because of the above qualities she nevertheless hesitates to marry. Another girl and a young married woman are also épris of Captain Hurstly. The struggle of the other girl to marry him, and of the married woman to keep alive a dead affection, and of Muriel herself to resist the temptation of yielding to her inclinations, are interspersed with brief incidents of her Stepney life. It is the unscrupulous girl who finally marries him, while the heroine, disillusioned at last, accepts a young doctor associated with her in her work in the slums.

The story is pleasant reading enough, though the author has not yet sufficient mastery of style to write a really good novel. Much of the writing is weak, and in places ungrammatical. A want of patience in endeavour suggests itself, for here and there the author shows signs of possessing a genuine gift of insight.

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“Now you may say what you like about Mrs. Craigie, but she has the real virtue of possessing distinction at a time when the average novelist is as like the other average novelist as two peas. The book ought to add materially to Mrs. Craigie’s enviable reputation.”—*New York Sun*.

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Notes on Novels.

*[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final.
Reviews of a selection will follow.]*

CECILIA.

By F. MARION CRAWFORD.

A story of modern Rome, with a novel idea working under it. The narrative plays round the life and adventures of Cecilia, the last of the Vestals. There is a mysterious connection between the lives of Cecilia and the heroine of the book—a young woman of to-day. Here is a fragment from the end. "Nor did she believe that she would ever trouble her brain again about 'Thus spake Zarathushtra,' and the Man who killed God, and the overcoming of Pity, and the Eternal Return, and all those terrible and wonderful things that live in Nietzsche's crazy web." (Macmillan. 6s.)

TALES ABOUT TEMPERAMENTS.

By JOHN OLIVER HOBSES.

Three stories, "The Worm that God Prepared," "Tis an Ill Flight Without Wings," and "Prince Toto." The volume also contains two plays, "A Repentance" and "Journeys End in Lovers Meeting." Writing of "A Repentance," which was played at the St. James's Theatre, the author expresses a hope "that the many feelings excited by the Boer War may help many to comprehend events which took place, and painful situations which, beyond doubt, occurred during the Carlist agitation in 1869." (Fisher Unwin.)

THE LADY OF THE BARGE.

By W. W. JACOBS.

Twelve tales by the author of "Many Cargoes." The cover presents a picture of the lady of the barge at the helm. She is clad in a print dress, wears a sun-bonnet, and smiles. A good omen for the book. We turn the pages and find: "'Sailormen 'ave their faults,' said the night watchman, frankly. 'I'm not denying of it. I used to 'ave myself when I was at sea, but being close with their money is a fault as can seldom be brought ag'in 'em.'" That is the beginning of one of the twelve, "Bill's Paper Chase." (Harper Bros. 3s. 6d.)

KITWYK.

By MRS. JOHN LANE.

A collection of Dutch sketches, humorous and pathetic. A pretty book, prettily illustrated, with a pretty cover and end papers. This from the author to the reader: "Somewhere in the enchanting Dutch kingdom there lies the little village of Kitwyk. Its inhabitants are a placid race, unconscious that they live both tragedy and comedy. I have lingered many a morning by the town-pump and heard the gossip—old gossip, for Kitwyk is averse to what is new. If in these days of mighty events and great writings some one will pause to read of Kitwyk, and perhaps smile, I shall be quite content." (John Lane.)

THE WAY OF A MAN.

By MORLEY ROBERTS.

Another of Mr. Morley Roberts's vigorous natural-man stories. It is mainly about Meta, who was twenty-two, as white and red as a daisy, as upright as a sapling, and as rounded as a kitten. Meta was for ever looking for someone who would invite her to travel in the big world outside Wimbledon. What became of Meta, what she thought of Lawrence, "a slender but powerful man fully six feet high," how she behaved amidst the adventures that enliven the story—these matters are briskly treated by a novelist whose instincts are with actions, rarely with motives. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

A PASTEBORD CROWN.

By CLARA MORRIS.

Miss Clara Morris, an actress, well known in America, little known in this country, is the author of "Life on the Stage," a volume that was very favourably received a few months ago. The present volume is mainly concerned with theatrical matters. "It was the last week of the season at the Globe Theatre, and it was closing in a blaze of glory. To leave a good taste in the mouth of the public, the actor-manager had given it a final week of Shakespeare." (Ibsister. 6s.)

THE OTHER MAN.

By MARTIN J. PRITCHARD.

By the author of "Without Sin." The first chapter is the confession of Wilfrid Tahourdin, a clergyman of the Church of England, and relates to "circumstances that occurred twelve years ago, namely, to the early part of 1803." On the title page is this from "The Other Man: a comedy in four Acts":—

"Thou hast's never seen an angel?"

"I'm no' so sure."

"What were it like?"

"A White Swallow, flying over the Rectory Gardens. The flowers seemed to look up to it." (Hutchinson. 6s.)

THE STORY OF MARY MACLANE.

By HERSELF.

This is another of the sham Marie-Bashkirtseff-English-woman's-Love-Letters books. Coming so late in the day, Mary was bound to be daring. She is—in a silly, ineffectual way. The frontispiece gives her portrait. She looks quite pretty; her hair is arranged (we are not quite sure about this) after the Edna May model. But beneath Mary's well cut Zouave (again we are not quite sure) beats a volcanic heart. She has also a savage, jerky soul. Here are a few scraps from her autobiography:—

I care neither for right nor for wrong—my conscience is nil.

I long unspeakably for Happiness. And so I await the Devil's coming.

You may gaze at and admire the picture in the front of this book. It is the picture of a genius—a genius with a good, strong young woman's body,—and inside the pictured body is a liver, a MacLane liver of admirable perfectness.

What books they write nowadays; and what books they publish. (Grant Richards.)

We have also received:—

THE THOUSAND EUGENIAS. By Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick. (Arnold.) And nine other stories, a discovery which the unsuspecting reader does not make until he opens the volume. "The Thousand Eugenias" fills two hundred pages.

THE BOOK OF BALLY-NOGGIN. By L. C. Alexander. (Richards.) Irish. There are ten short stories in the volume. "Mike the Omadhoun," &c.

ROGER BRILLIANT. By Mrs. Henry Dudeney. (Hodder.) A pleasing story of country life. "For heir, the once fruitful Brilliants had only a proud dusky girl"—that was Robin.

THE WIZARD'S LIGHT. By S. K. Hocking. (Warne.) A Cornish story. "I am the happiest woman on earth. But I think nothing so reminds me of my happiness as the gleam of the Wizard's Light."

TRELAWNY AND HIS FRIENDS. By H. Freeland. (Ibsister.) A boisterous story opening in a French studio. It lightly touches many phases of modern life.

THE CRIMSON WING. By H. C. Chatfield Taylor. (Richards.) Fighting, &c. The title is from Gray's "Conquest's crimson wing."

THE CANON'S DAUGHTER. By W. B. Cooke. (Sonnen-schein.) "The Reverend Canon Sunby sat in his comfortable study with a thankful heart and ruddy countenance."

THE COMMANDANT. By E. Glanville. (Digby Long.) A Boer War story. "Miss Fairfield, what would you think of a man who fought against his own countrymen?"

THE WHIMS OF ERASMUS. By W. Carter Platts. (Digby Long.) Humourous. Erasmus's surname was Tuttlebury. We remember former books about Tuttlebury by this author, and the remark of a sympathetic contemporary that the Tuttlebury books are "an antidote to melancholia."

THE ROMANCE OF TWIN DAUGHTERS. By R. St. J. Corbett. (Digby Long.) Also humourous, but less stubbornly so than Tuttlebury.

THE HAUNTED MAJOR. By Robert Marshall. (Richards. Illustrated by Harry Furniss.)

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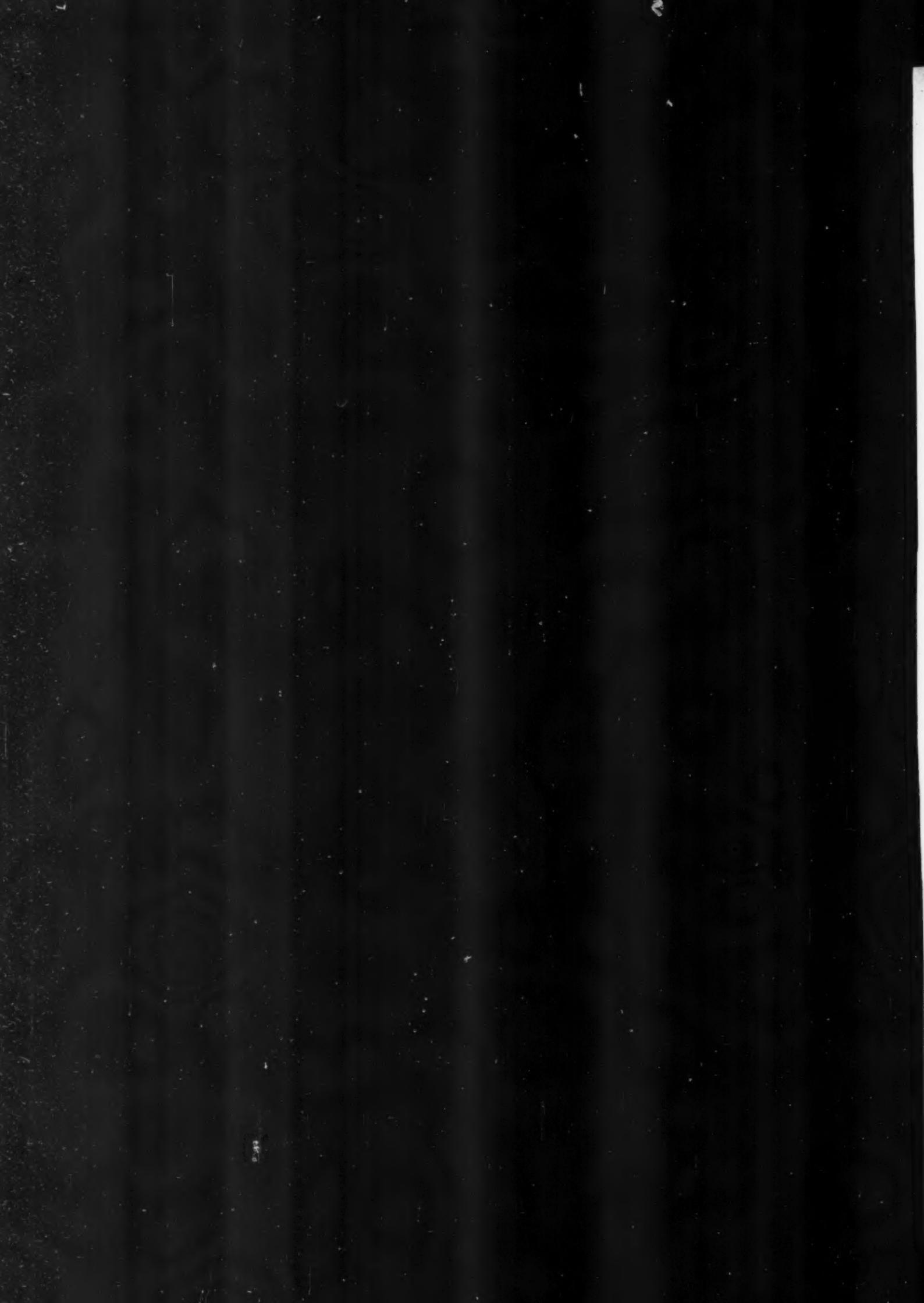
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The Isolation of English Fiction.

MUCH excellent, and some entirely admirable, work is being done at the present day by English novelists, as in these columns we have often recognised with all lawful generosity. But a perusal of some of the foreign fiction—Russian, Italian, Dutch—which has recently received the honour of translation confirms us in the suspicion, which has been long growing in our minds and probably also in the minds of many other people, that the worst limitations of the English novel are intolerably narrow and ought soon to be widened. In England there are only two kinds of serious novel, the domestic and the historical, and the latter variety is now done with such extreme and unoriginal badness that it may be said to have no artistic existence. There is, in effect, only one kind of novel in England, the domestic. The living English writers who can produce a faithful study of English manners on a larger scale than that of mere domesticity, and with a deeper purpose than that of mere diversion, can be counted on the fingers. In his introduction to an English translation of Frederick van Eeden's "The Depths of Deliverance" (Unwin), Mr. Will H. Dircks' says, of England: "The novel of entertainment almost seems, indeed, to have arrived at its flower of evolution. The novel of revelation, the novel that touches essential things of life, hardly seems with us a home-made product; at any rate what might be called the higher fiction comes to us very often from abroad." Despite an unfortunate phraseology, this utterance touches the point. The novels that agitate Europe are never English novels, and the reason is that our novels lack sternness, seriousness, curiosity, and abound too freely in the charming and the sentimental. There are authors in Russia, Italy and France, and perhaps elsewhere, whose works as a matter of course appear promptly in London, but we doubt if any Englishman, except Mr. H. G. Wells, can boast that his novels are published simultaneously in two languages.

With regard to "The Depths of Deliverance," Dr. van Eeden's strange and interesting study of a mystical and morbid feminine temperament may be accepted as illustrating in a fair average way the differences between English and continental fiction. It is by no means a great novel. We have a dozen artists in England who in technique, in invention, and in emotional power, could surpass, and easily surpass, this Dutch novelist at his best. Nevertheless the book has an earnest, tireless curiosity, a courageous desire for truth whatever truth costs, and an austere avoidance of prettiness, which are nearly unknown in England. Most English readers will dislike the book; they will call it unpleasant, unhealthy, depressing, and a bore. We really do not want, they will say, to toil through this lamentable record of a bizarre woman who committed adultery once and tried to commit suicide twice, and generally was a sinister compound of the mysticism of Joan of Arc and the ineffectual of the

heroines of "Keynotes." But what in fact repels the English reader is nothing but the honest, careless impulse of truth at the root of it. The English reader does not object to unpleasantness, unhealthiness, and morbidity,—provided these qualities are served warm in a batter of sentimentality. An instance of what the English reader will stand in the way of sexual morbidity is at this moment prominently before the public. Among the more notorious of recent successes was a book written by a lady—we forbear to name it—in which a subject of the last unpleasantness, a subject which we do not remember to have seen even hinted at by any great continental writer, was dwelt upon to an extent which would have startled the late Mr. Vizetelly, who fell into hot water through Zola's "La Terre." But the book was enthusiastically reviewed in the most respectable quarters, and enthusiastically bought and read, thanks simply to the effulgence of its sentimentality.

So much for the "taint" which is said to render the greatest foreign fiction unfit for the English public. Let us pass to another and more important aspect of our thesis. Seven novels of Signora Matilde Serao have been translated into English. The last of these, just issued by Mr. Heinemann, is "The Conquest of Rome," being the history of an Italian Deputy in Rome. Matilde Serao, like Dr. van Eeden, is far removed from the first-rate. She is a journalist and her novels have a journalistic cast. They are vulgar, coarse, clumsy, talkative, and sometimes hysterical. They lack form, and they are overloaded with masses of description; athwart these vast masses the characters flit pale and unconvincing. They are utterly un-classical both in conception and in execution. But they interest, they often enthrall; and their attraction is a serious attraction. A man who scorned the diversions of the novel-reader, might read "The Conquest of Rome" and rise from it impressed. For Matilde Serao has a wide-flung gaze on life. She will examine a mere home with particularity, but in doing so she will never forget that that home is a unit in an army of homes, and that its movement is part of a larger and weightier movement. Her creative gift is constantly synthetic—synthetic of units into wholes, and this synthetic gift is precisely what is lacking to the English genius of fiction. In her long and passionate description of the human cargo of a night train from Capua to Rome, after pages of detail, she gathers up her threads into a general impression of the vitality of the train as an entity. She says:—

The gentle pacific healing balm of rest had come to still the unquiet spirits, had soothed them, had spread over those perturbed mortals, whether too happy or too unhappy; and they were all at ease in their sleep. Irritated nerves, anger, disdain, desires, sickness, cowardice, unceaseable grief—all the bestiality and grandeur of human nature travelling in that nocturnal train was lost in the great calm embrace of sleep. The train was hastening to their fate—sad, lucky, or commonplace—those dreaming spirits and those prostrate shapes of beings who were tasting the profound delight of painless annihilation, leaving it to a power outside themselves to bear them along.

In the same way, after fifteen pages of the hero's dubious adventures in search of furnished apartments, she arrives at a general picture of "the great equivocacy of Roman life, so decorous and impassive in appearance, so restless, passionate, burning in reality" And she finishes: "In his vague instinctive dread of this female omnipresence and omnipotence, in his fierce thirst for solitude and independence, he took lodgings in the Via Angelo where there were no women." This is synthesis. When you have read "The Conquest of Rome," with its lyrical fervour and its immense emotional effects unmarred by any trifling, feeble prettiness, you cannot but feel that for all its stridency and its too rapid over-coloured verbiage, it has impressed on your mind a picture of the political, the social and the amatory life of "Rome" first, and of fly-like individuals second.

Contrast with this novel, faulty and gaudy perhaps, the novels of political and social life of Mr. Anthony Hope, who has now settled down steadily to the career of the fashionable, brilliant, typical English novelist, the Paul Bourget of Mayfair. Take his *Quisantes* and his *Peggies*, even his gods in cars; and having duly admired their dexterity, their amazing pleasantness, and their neat dinner-table wit, try to discover in them the least national significance, the remotest trace of a synthetic effort to weld particulars into generals,—and you will fail. It is impossible even to find in them a serious masculine desire for verisimilitude in any vital matter. Yet Mr. Hope is a man of brilliant parts, and not without some imagination, and his work is received with deference.

To conclude, we will mention the greatest living master. The third volume of Mrs. Garnett's translation of the complete novels of Leo Tolstoy is issued (Heinemann), and it contains, *inter alia*, those wonderful and dreadful works, "The Death of Ivan Ilyitch" and "Family Happiness." The former is the history of one individual, the latter is the history of two. They are short stories, and in their detachment from the man of life they distantly resemble our characteristic English fiction. They have not the synthetic quality of Matilde Serao. The lesson which they offer to the English novelist—and we think that that practitioner is at last beginning to read the productions of his foreign brethren—is the lesson of sobriety, calm justice, indefatigable searching for truth, and high disregard of what the consequences of finding truth may be. Both tales are inexpressibly sad, but their sadness uplifts, chastens, and is finally a source of joy. They are sublime examples of courageous fidelity to life, and if they convince only one English novelist that fidelity to life will increase, instead of lessening, his emotional power, that fidelity to life does not connote hardness or lack of sympathy, then Tolstoy has not written in vain.

Paris Letter.

(From our French Correspondent.)

It is a pleasure to welcome a French novel which is at once natural, sincere, strong and clean in its passion. "La Maison du Pêché," by Marcelle Tinayre, is really an impressive and remarkable story. It is something more, a study of heart and conscience which places its author in the rank of writers that count. Passion is here treated with all the customary fulness of detail of French fiction, but with this difference, that the details are essential as illustrative of the fiery ordeal of conscience, that they are offered with dignity, if not with quite the reserve that ennobles the treatment, and not dwelt upon with vulgar complacency as is generally the case. The part that physical passion plays in the development and ruin of the unhappy hero, and the insane repugnance it creates in ascetic souls like his mother's and her austere, meddlesome, and backbiting friends is so immense, so inevitable that art itself compelled Madame Tinayre to carry us beyond the ante-chamber of love and show us how its intimacies affect each of the lovers.

The *Maison du Pêché* is a little pavilion built by a renegade Jansenist for an actress he carried off to the scandal of the Jansenist confraternity before the Revolution. Profaned by an impure love, his austere descendants kept it closed and unoccupied until the opening of this story, when Madame de Chanteprie opens it reluctantly for her son's tutor, not thinking it seemly that a middle-aged lady should harbour a middle-aged tutor under her roof. This opening is done briefly and well. Madame Tinayre's descriptions are quick and vivid, of few strokes and strikingly suggestive. Her style is both sober

and elegant. How well she makes us realise the ascetic interior of Madame de Chanteprie, and the rigid provincial life, "the silence of convents and dead towns where life seems hardened in memory and waiting." Augustine de Chanteprie cherished the little feudal city, without commerce, without industry, and, so near to Paris, yet fallen into the torpor of the provinces, but which preserved in its ruins the pious and heroic soul of the past. This landscape of soft valleys, of azure-hued plains, of chestnut woods and oak, was indeed the "fair France of the trouveres." It is this dreamy tenderness of the lad that eventually helps to break down the barrier of ascetism raised by his mother and his tutor between him and life. His mother is a hard and awful woman, a "saint" whose fetish is chastity. Her son unless he marries must go immaculate to the grave, for even marriage is a desecration of her high and inhuman ideal. She dreams of being a Monica to this Augustine who must never fall. When he falls she forgets the story of St. Augustine and repudiates him remorselessly. She and the tutor work together for his conversion, and when they have succeeded, and this poor tortured creature, the victim of his austere ancestors as well as of the implacable virtue of those whose influence masters him, comes home to die of the love he has so stupidly been lectured into renouncing, instead of lamenting her loss, this terrible mother, this moral executioner triumphantly holds the hand of her dying son and chants aloud the prayers for the dying without a tremor in her voice or tear in her eye. Like Blanche of Castille, she prefers her son dead than living in sin. And what is this famous sin that sets a whole stupid coterie by the ears, makes country louts fling filth at a pretty and engaging woman who has done no harm to anyone, who being free to make a gift of herself, does so instead of seeking to make an excellent marriage; causes a scandal not less terrific than that of the old romance of the renegade Jansenist and his Rosalba of the pavilion of sin? Honest, simple, disinterested love, the love of two young people, she a widow and an artist, pretty, independent and charming, he an innocent recluse "with hair of ashen fairness and eyes as soft as violets." They begin with the best of intentions, first in friendship, then he dreams of marriage and ardently seeks to convert this fascinating Pagan, who believes in nothing but the present, but asks nothing better than to believe if only she can be convinced and persuaded. She can't, and this incessant preoccupation of her soul bores her. Here nature springs her eternal snare upon the well-meaning lovers. They find themselves one evening alone beneath a starlit sky. "No light, no sound. Nothing which revealed the presence of creatures sleeping behind the walls. The frogs had stopped singing. There was nothing living under the heavens but a man and a woman drunk from a kiss. From time to time, they moved away from each other, without letting go their hands, and gazed in adoration each upon the other's face. They took a few steps forward along the starlit road, and stopped again to join their lips."

This is no shabby discreditable sentiment, no mere sensuality of a youth and a fast woman, but honest, clean and simple love, the love we all sympathise with when we are just and human and make no monstrous claims upon humanity, the love that does not injure the man and should not injure the woman if convention were not so hypocritical and atrociously unjust. It is idiotic to dub it with the name of sin, since sin implies wrong-doing and there can be nothing really wrong, however imprudent and unworldly wise, in frank, sincere and simple love.

The sacred confraternity of backbiters and scandal-mongers get hold of Augustine's secret. Then begins the inevitable martyrdom of the lovers. Of course marriage is out of the question since Madame de Chanteprie would never give her consent. In vain Fanny tries to soothe her lover by renouncing all hope of marriage instead of

inducing him to send his mother "sommations respectueuses." Her disinterestedness softens no heart to her. The priest who tried to convert her and did not succeed is bitter against her, and we see, modified by modern conditions of life, something of the spirit of the persecutors of Hawthorne's Hester. "What have I done?" asks poor Fanny in consternation before the hatred she has provoked. When virtue becomes unnatural it is always cruel.

Fanny's sorrows are of the ordinary kind. She is not in herself interesting or complex. A loveable, tender, passionate woman who loves with her whole heart, and nothing more. But the strong poignant note of the book is Augustine's conflict between tenderness and passion, between austerity and sensuality. H. L.

Impressions.

IV.—Brahms and The Bird.

THERE he was, sitting on the bank just beneath the tree where we had heard the thrush singing the night before I left for London. His thistle-spud was by his side, and his old face was upturned listening to the bird's song.

The bird stopped singing, and I, brimming over with the latest thing I had heard in London, eager to talk about it, hardly noticed that the song had ceased. The music that had so excited me that afternoon was still dancing in my head, as it had been dancing through the long train journey, trying to harmonise itself with the swaying of the carriage and the roar through the tunnels. I was longing to talk, and there was something about Jonathan's calm but sympathetic impassivity that always loosened the lips. He glanced at me with puckered eyes, shrewdly, but also with a lurk of invitation in them. That was enough.

"It was Brahms," I began, "two Hungarian dances by Brahms. They start at a canter, like a horse when his forefeet touch the turf; they tear through the wind, and drop you down into a garden, where in a moment you are dreaming a wonderful dream, living a year in a minute. And it's music, music all the time, such wild, dancing, wanton music, without beginning, and endless. It makes a gipsy of you: you are wandering through Hungary dancing and singing as you go: you have been a gipsy for hundreds of years: you are part of the country, fetterless and without a frontier, that is theirs, and you know all the time, that underneath the wild songs you are shouting to the pine trees, there is a deep even harmony going on that is centuries older than you are, older than the catch you are singing: it is the eternal song of natural life, the song-soul of the country that never changes, the wordless song that musicians hear. And you say to yourself looking at the flushed faces of the musicians, and the bows of the violins, darting, dancing, sweeping backwards and forwards in a rhythmic movement so quick that the eye cannot follow—you say to yourself with a catch of the breath—Oh, will they never stop?

You look at the conductor—he is all of a tremble; his head bends forward, his body sways, and in that little baton he holds, which moves like a thing gone mad, all the movement and wildness of the music seems to be caught; that baton and his two gleaming hands hold in hypnotic sway all the fire of temperament, all the glow of enthusiasm that each musician is throwing into his instrument; and sometimes in a flash the two hands come together and shoot out pointing to some musician as if saying—*You!* and in that moment his instrument cries out high above all the others. Will they never stop? You look at the audience, hundreds of them, wedged together, standing like marionettes, their bodies swaying, their heads jerking.

It isn't like Wagner's music, which leads you upwards in tantalising sweeps, giving you a glimpse of the unscalable heights where rest waits; then throws you back, only to seize you again in fresh tantalising sweeps and curves, always drawing near, never attaining, giving you more glorious glimpses of the summit, and then casting you back to earth again, as if you were a sack of potatoes. Brahms, in his Hungarian dances, never does that. He springs everything on you in a rush, takes you by the hair, flings you out into the whirlwind, gives you a few minutes of delirious joy, and just when you think you can't bear any more, comes the end suddenly: you are clay again, spent—miserable."

I paused. Jonathan looked at me and said sternly, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." When that bird sings his evening song, it's the same song as was sung two thousand years ago. Ay, it'll be the same song two thousand years hence. Your M. Brahms leaves you miserable, you say. That bird tells me things that make me want to live, and not afraid to die."

The thrush began again. I could no longer see the old man's face.

Drama.

Essential Drama.

"ELEANOR" is the very antipodes of the clever play which I considered last week. "My Lady Virtue" was a triumph of ingenious stagecraft, and at the first touch of the psychological finger it collapsed like a blown bubble. "Eleanor" has no stagecraft whatever; but it is human, it is felt, and therefore to my mind it has, what the other play had not, the first essential of serious drama. The defects of structure are obvious enough, and one cannot deny that, in spite of the admirable acting which has been put at Mrs. Ward's disposal, they are exceedingly irritating. But I do not think that they ought to count for too much in comparison with what is as a rule conspicuously lacking in modern plays, the presence of a genuinely emotional theme, interesting in its complexity, tenderly touched, and worked out to a natural and moving issue. They must, however, I suppose, be dealt with.

In large measure they proceed from the fact that Mrs. Ward is inexperienced in writing for the stage, and is at the same time attempting one of the most difficult tasks even for a practised playwright, the translation into dramatic form of imaginative stuff which has already taken shape in accordance with quite different artistic conditions. She has not learnt the psychology of an audience as distinct from that of a solitary reader. She has not the trick of insisting upon her dramatic motives in such a way as to make them clear in the absence of a previous familiarity with the book. The first act, though it contains more than one tedious conversation, still seems to me to leave the exact emotional relations between the three principal characters at the outset of the play uncomfortably vague. At a later point the reason why Eleanor herself, as well as Lucy, should take refuge from Manisty's pursuit remains obscure. Nor has Mrs. Ward grasped the limits of the attention which it is psychologically possible for an audience to give to a situation of emotional stress and strain. Her best scenes are almost painfully exhausting. The dialogue of them wants ruthless clipping by a word here and a sentence there throughout; and I am sure that the last act is overburdened, and would be more effective if it closed before the actual death-scene, at the point where Eleanor sends Lucy to find Manisty in the court-yard. And finally, she has not wholly succeeded in isolating the simplicity of a dramatic action from the web of varied interests which go to make up a novel. I should be loth to lose the scene in

which the mad Alice Manisty first upbraids Lucy Foster for robbing Eleanor of her brother's love, and then attempts to kill her, for the simple reason that it gives a splendid opportunity to Miss Elizabeth Robins, who is one of the few English actresses with a touch of something like genius. But dramatically, even apart from the question whether madness or any other pathological phenomenon is legitimate material for a play, I feel it to be a mistake. Its contribution to the progress of the action is ludicrously out of proportion to the spilth of emotion which it requires. In fact, it contributes nothing whatever, for Lucy forgets all that has happened, and to Eleanor it only brings further confirmation of Manisty's love for Lucy, of which she has already become fully conscious. Moreover, it spoils the following scene in which Eleanor throws herself on Lucy's mercy, and entreats her to give Manisty back; for the harassing of the girl by Eleanor thus has the effect of a replica of the previous harassing of her in exactly the same surroundings by Alice, and the result is at once monotonous and rather painful. The place becomes a torture-chamber. This is somewhat hard on Miss Lilian Braithwaite, who gets a most difficult part in Lucy, and, to my mind, manages it splendidly.

For all its technical deficiencies, "Eleanor" is more interesting, and in the best sense more dramatic, than any other new play that I have seen this long while. It has the life-blood in it. The first essential of drama, as of all art that is not merely decorative, is emotion, emotion felt by the artist and conveyed to the spectator. The second, and this is what differentiates a drama from, say, a lyric, is that the emotion must not be stationary. It must have a history, must ebb and flow, and must draw the spectator with it through a series of states of feeling which may be of less or greater range, but must of course be capable of coalescing into a unity as the ultimate and total impression to be left by the play. Such a dramatic ideal is most completely reached by something of the nature of a conflict, some theme by which opposing sympathies are awaked, which sway the spectator now in this direction, now in that, until the discords are resolved into a final harmony. Precisely this kind of theme is involved in "Eleanor." Edward Manisty is beloved by two women. Eleanor Burgoyne, world-broken and no longer young, holds him by intellectual sympathies and the memory of early days. A serene autumn of happiness seems opening before her until the arrival of Lucy Foster with her "fresh young beauty" blots out the prospect. So far the situation is fairly obvious, but Mrs. Ward gives it subtlety by laying stress on the point that the rivalry, conscious on the one side, unconscious on the other, between the two women, is in the long run less strong than the tenderness which they have simultaneously come to feel for one another. And so the balance of emotional forces is in unstable equilibrium. Lucy, in the third act, sacrifices herself for her friend, and Eleanor, who at first has fought for her own hand, makes surrender in the fourth act of her own last chance of happiness to that of the girl. That she then dies must be taken, as is so often the case with a stage death, less as an event in itself, than as the natural sign and symbol that the dramatic struggle is over. Mrs. Ward's handling of the issue she sets seems to me true to life and true to the highest elements in life. Once she gets properly at it, which is not unfortunately until half way through the piece, she succeeds in holding one's interest and emotions to its close. Her strength is in what matters; her weakness in what is, comparatively speaking, insignificant and external. I wish, however, I could convince myself of the adequacy of Edward Manisty to win the affections of two exquisite women. Even in the book of "Eleanor" he is a painfully cold-blooded specimen of the "Over-man." There, however, one more or less accepts Mrs. Ward's assertions of his attractiveness. But on the stage assertions are valueless.

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Art.

Buyers, Painters and Artists.

LONDON is really a wonderful place! Take last Saturday afternoon; then imagine a citizen who cares about pictures. With a little knowledge about the dates of new exhibitions, easily gained, a little walking to and fro, and he, without being a penny piece the poorer, could enjoy as many pictures as his strength would allow. Meissonier or Leader; Clausen or Prof. Corrodi; Cazin or Seymour Lucas; Corot or P. F. Poole, R.A.; Ayerst Ingram or Harpignies—all were spread out before him, and he could take his choice of the dishes.

Had he visited the galleries on Friday afternoon, he would have seen that shy personality—the wealthy picture buyer. Middle-aged, tall, dressed well, but not obtrusively, he may be recognised by that air which always encompasses a man who is toying with a business to which he is not accustomed, in which he is not sure of the ground. You may know him by the deference which the firm, or the officials of the gallery, offer him. Their attitude is a lesson in the minor business of excessive good manners. His entrance into the gallery immediately makes them unnaturally natural. It would be almost worth while becoming a picture-buyer to command such deference. How soothing to escape from the historic house you have rented, where you are misunderstood, told to do this and that, where your opinions on art are not treated with the slightest respect—how pleasant to escape from this atmosphere, and to drive down to some dim picture gallery to be humoured, listened to with that slight inclination of the head that is so delightful by cheerful, prosperous-looking gentlemen whose time you can waste, who will see you to the door, and smile you au revoir. Truly the rich have their compensations. Sociologists do not recognise that the pecuniary success of professional men is due in great part to the fact that their clients can, for a fixed sum, purchase deferential conversation from them. I once knew a rich and perfectly healthy colonial who spent every morning of his annual London holiday in consultation with eminent London physicians. "It's ridiculous," he said; "why for two thickuns and the odd bobs, I get fifteen minutes of the highest intellectual conversation in London. And they listen to me, sir!"

The critic does not, of course, receive this deference. He has been let severely alone since the day Mr. Joseph Pennell printed, side by side, his own opinion of the pictures, and the proprietor of the gallery's appreciation of them whispered into his ear. But the true critic's interest in pictures must always be subservient to his interest in life, and try as he will he cannot help remembering snatches of dialogue overheard in the course of his peregrinations, such as: *Proprietor*: "We've no landscape painter to touch Mr. Leader." *Buyer*: "No, I suppose not!" *Proprietor*: "Exceptionally fine quality. Do you not think so?" *Buyer*: "Yes! very fine quality." The following dialogue between a lady and the painter who was conducting her round his pictures, sounded less real. *Lady*: "The water is perfectly lovely. There's almost a perfume from the ozone in it." *Painter*: "Er-thank-you!"

As I remarked before, London is a wonderful place. And if one has outgrown Meissonier, his pictures still incite to curiosity if not to admiration. One remembers the calculations, after the manner of Mr. Holt Schooling, of the height of the piles of sovereigns stacked on the surface that would be necessary before you could purchase one of his tiny canvases. There are eight Meissoniers at Messrs. Tooth's autumn exhibition, all in double frames with velvet mounts. One of them "Meissonier à Antibes" shows the great, little man on a white horse patrolling the yellow sands at Antibes beside a blue sea. He wears a billycock hat; sits his horse well; this little picture

certainly has human interest. In Messrs. Tooth's exhibition, as at Mr. McLean's next door, there is something for all tastes. What a joy it is to come upon the sunny grace of Cazin's little "Dunes in Springtime," or the feathery flick through wet paint that gives life to the trees in Corot's "Le Laboureur, effet du Soir." Indeed the charm of these two Haymarket galleries is that the directors are so catholic in their tastes; or it may be that they are wise enough to sink their individual preferences, and to remember that picture buyers are in various stages of comprehension and culture. There are pictures in these two exhibitions to which I would not offer house-room: also there are pictures on the walls for which I would, if I were that way inclined, build a house for the pleasure of hanging them within it. Two men, comparatively new men, would be candidates—Mr. Thaulow and Mr. J. Weiss. In this country Mr. Thaulow is the better known. His snow piece at last year's Royal Academy was, in the opinion of many good judges, the finest picture on the walls. His "Steps of the Salute, Venice," that deft, sparkling study of rippling light and clear atmosphere, may still be seen at Mr. McLean's. In the same gallery hangs Mr. J. Weiss's "Chalk Quarry, near Arundel, Afternoon." Mr. Weiss is, I believe, a nationalised Englishman of Dutch birth, living and painting in Sussex. He is a landscape painter of intelligence and force. In the breadth, sombre beauty, and the lighting of his compositions he is kinsman to the men of Barbizon. It is an impossible task to translate a landscape into words; but if you want to know the kind of work a comparatively unknown man living a quiet, obscure life in one of the home counties is doing, go to this gallery and look at Mr. Weiss's "Chalk Quarry." You will find Mr. Weiss again at the Goupil Gallery in Regent Street. Indeed, I believe it was Mr. Marchant of the Goupil Gallery who first "discovered" Mr. Weiss at the Paris Salon two years ago.

The large room at the Goupil Gallery is given over to a one-man exhibition—small, but memorable. It is called Paintings and Drawings by G. Clausen, A.R.A.—twenty oil paintings, and thirty pastels and drawings in chalk. The paintings vary in interest: there is no pastel that is not significant. It would need a book to say all one could say about Mr. Clausen's temperament and achievement. He is the antithesis of the popular subject painter: commercialism, that insidious foe of all art, has never touched him. He is a painters' painter, an artists' artist, by which I mean that his work is more interesting to the craftsman than to the connoisseur, or to the happy-go-lucky picture-lover. Heredity or fortune gave him many of the gifts that go to the making of a great picture, but she denied him full cognisance of that rounded feeling for sheer beauty that puts the crown on the craftsman's work. In technique the equal of Mr. La Thangue (you remember his goat farm picture at the Royal Academy); more learned, with a surer vision than Mr. Edward Stott, he falls behind those painters in the power to express essential beauty pictorially. Examine his "The Path by the Ricks." The way the sun has been studied and caught, the extraordinary technical power shown in the drawing of the hens, wild with excitement and movement, as they burrow and flutter in the straw, are achievements that any artist would be proud to sign; but this picture somehow fails to give one the full pleasure it should. It is so good: one regrets that the word great cannot be used, and wonders why not. It is, as it were, the part, not the whole.

But when I come to write of Mr. Clausen's pastels, I am inclined to withdraw all I have said about his limitations. In these small lyrical studies, notes of the changes in the seasons and the hour such as "Twilight," "Dusk," "Winter Sunshine"; notes of simple things seen in a day's walk, such as "The Plough Boy," "The Pond," "Sheep Fold," he has found, I believe, the perfect medium for the expression of his gifted and austere trained

temperament. I have called them lyrical studies, because Mr. Clausen seems to me to have carried out in his medium Mr. A. T. Quiller-Couch's admirable definition of the lyric: "I take the lyric to be a short poem, essentially melodious in rhythm and structure—treating summarily of a single thought, feeling or situation." That is just what Mr. Clausen has done in colour. The man who on a few inches of canvas can express all the blank bareness of "Bare Fields," and on a few inches of canvas all the wonders of the "Harvest Moon" shining on the gathered-in plenteousness, need have no regrets that he has not yet scaled other heights.

C. L. H.

Science.

What is the Will?

It is one of the penalties that we pay for having inherited rather than acquired our civilization that in all matters of psychology we use terms which refer to ideas long since obsolete. Thanks to this "mythological" tendency—to use our neighbours' phrase—we still find novelists describing their heroes or villains as possessing, like the protagonist of Thackeray's delightful "Notch in the Axe," "a mighty will" in the same way as if they were to speak of them as having mighty biceps, or thick heads of hair. Mystical writers, indeed, who are of all people the most grossly materialistic in their ideas, often speak of this "will" as of some separate entity which can be projected to a distance like an arrow, and will, unlike an arrow, return to its original possessor without being fetched. Yet such phrases, like most antiquated figures of speech, correspond to nothing in Nature. In the days when the pineal gland was supposed to be the seat of the soul, and Rabbinical writers talked nonsense about the bone "Luz," it may have been supposed that there was a special box or receptacle in the brain set apart for the service of the will. But the closer anatomy of the brain which the microscope has rendered possible has changed all that, and we now know that it is as idle to seek for any separate entity called the will as it would be to attempt to localize that mysterious attribute of all matter which we call memory.

In spite of this, however, the will exists, and we have sufficient and convincing proof of the fact. Among the many signs of that hysteria which is perhaps the most distressing of all mental diseases, what is called *abulia* or "willessness" is one of the most common. Many families, especially those who present other signs of degenerescence, have at least one member who, though perfectly vitalized and to all appearance in full possession of his or her faculties, yet refuses to take any part in the common affairs of life. "I am not lazy," said a sufferer of this kind, a robust and hearty wheelwright of 53 to Dr. Janet at the Salpêtrière; "for thirty years I have worked in the shop of which I am now master, and everyone trusted me. I am as strong as ever, I eat well, drink nothing but water, and sleep well. But now I can do nothing. I should not get out of my bed if my wife did not force me to it. I know the contracts I have undertaken with my customers, who trust to me to fulfil them. I know that I am ruining my family. I know that my conduct is shameful—but it is stronger than I am, and I can do nothing." In this very typical case, the determining cause of the attack was probably a typhoid fever from which he had suffered two years before his visit to Dr. Janet, and one is glad to hear that the loss of will yielded to treatment. In other cases, where the determining cause is hereditary or congenital, the symptoms are more marked and less hopeful. Thus, in the case of a tall and strong girl

of 20 whom Dr. Janet calls "Marcelle," he found a positive disinclination to make the least movement.

"When it is proposed to her to make some movement of the arm," he says in his book on "Névroses et les Idées fixes," "especially to stretch forth the hand to take from a table an object shown to her, she refuses with a sulky air. If one insists much and often, she rises slowly and stretches out her hand a little way, then remains motionless, and says: 'But I cannot,' and draws back her arm." "Sometimes," he goes on to say, "it will take Marcelle from a quarter to half-an-hour before she can make up her mind to take a pen or a glass off a table, and when she is alone, the same thing happens. She cannot succeed in undressing herself to go to bed if not helped. She hesitates to touch her dress, succeeds with difficulty in taking it off a little way, but in place of continuing puts it on again and begins all over again."

In the symptoms of this last case we have probably a key to the problem, What is the will? What is wanting in the unfortunate Marcelle is plainly the faculty of decision, of making up her mind what to do, and this corresponds with what psychologists have been able to observe with regard to the evolution of what we call the will. With very low forms of life all the actions are automatic, or, to speak more correctly, reflex. Present an object of convenient size to the amoeba, and it will shoot forth one of its pseudopods or foot-like processes to seize it, on the chance, to use another figure of speech, that it may prove useful as food. And this most primitive of all actions is entirely involuntary or instinctive. We cannot prevent the amoeba from shooting forth its pseudopod without putting an end to its existence altogether, and it exercises no selective action as to the nature of the things that it attempts to seize. Not differently does the human baby act in one of the earliest stages of its existence, when he grabs at everything that attracts his fugitive attention, including therein the kitten's tail and the nose of the casual visitor. But mark the difference when the baby's brain becomes more fitted to the functions it will eventually have to perform, and he begins to learn from experience that tails and noses, in their native and uncooked condition at any rate, can afford him no sustenance. Henceforth it is no longer everything at which he grabs, but only those objects which he thinks rightly or wrongly are likely to be of use to him, and sweets and toys begin to replace for him, as objects of desire, tails and noses. Yet nothing has come into the baby's brain in the meantime. The same convolutions, nerves, grey matter, and the rest were present therein from the beginning, but it is only now that some of them have begun to enter into function, and that their possessor's actions have become voluntary instead of involuntary. Or shall we look for the corresponding phenomena at the other end of life? How often do we see an old man, once perhaps the controller of the destinies of states, or of those vast business concerns which are only less than states, resigning the control of his own daily life and actions to some younger and more vigorous person—lucky for him if he or she (and it is generally a she) is swayed by the tie of blood or affection to exercise her power therein in the direction of his interests—and only concerning himself about the trifles that once appeared to him in the same light as they do to the majority of his juniors. In this last melancholy state, when—

From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
And Swift expires, a driveller and a show—

it is again plain that nothing has departed from the material brain that was once there either actually or potentially. What is really lacking is the power of comparing and deciding upon things—or in one word, of judgment.

All these facts, then, go to show that what we colloquially call the will is nothing but the judgment. This theory seems to explain all the cases here sketched, and we have no difficulty in supposing that in the baby the judgment

centres are like the folded wings of the dragon fly on his first appearance, not yet expanded and brought into activity by exercise, and that they are suffering in the case of the wheelwright from a temporary, and in the cases of Marcelle and the old man from a permanent loss of nutrition; and this derives great probability from the researches that have lately taken place into the minute anatomy of the brain. It may or may not be true that, as M. Grasset has lately announced, there are certain neurons within the grey matter of the cortex which specially concern themselves with the functions of judgment or volition and with nothing else. But it seems to be ascertained that there are neurons—called sometimes neurons of association—which have for their office the reawakening of the memory of former sensory impressions and the comparison of them with the immediate impressions of the senses which alone put our cerebral functions into action. That such a doctrine may seem destructive of the belief in the free will of man which has survived from a lower stage of culture cannot be helped; yet like most extensions of human knowledge it is, rightly considered, full of hope for the future. For these neurons of association, the bodily seat of the will or judgment, can like other parts of the human organism be modified and improved by careful training; and it is already evident that by well-adapted means we can strengthen weak judgments, restore, in some cases, the temporary loss of the judgment faculty, and perhaps, in time, manage even to retard its decay. Otherwise we should have reason to despair of the education of which we nowadays hear so much and which yet makes so little progress.

F. LEGGE.

Correspondence.

Mr. Barrie and His Interpreters.

SIR.—May I appeal to the ACADEMY with regard to the acting of Mr. Barrie's penultimate play, "Quality Street" represents a phase of Georgian social life. Mr. Barrie has absorbed the atmosphere of that period, and enabled us to breathe it with him—to realise the individual social outlook—the customs, manners, ideas, of that age. The wording is Georgian, the play has the flavour of a period. Now what has the Vaudeville Company made of this work of art? Simply turned it into a sort of burlesque comedy. Delicate humour is not sufficient; the audience must be tickled to laughter. Pathos is hidden under a veneer of so-called fun, and life-like representation sacrificed to the pandering to popular taste. In fact, this pathetic, sincere, historical little play degenerates into a farce.

I do not know how Mr. Barrie feels, but I came away with my blood boiling, and tea in a neighbouring shop to the accompaniment of the cackle of silly women who gushed over the acting—"amusing," "such fun," &c.—did not tend to the soothing of my nerves.—
Yours, &c.,

ELICE LOYAU.

Author and Reviewer.

SIR.—Though I have been for many years a poor official hack, I do not forget the time when I practised at the *Nisi Prius* Bar, nor yet the days when I dabbled in journalism. I am able therefore to appreciate the cleverness of your review of my book, "The Bible and Modern Criticism." Being myself a hard hitter, moreover, as my book testifies, I am always ready for hard blows in return. And the question whether your reviewer has not dealt me a good many "foul" blows must be decided by the public—the only umpire in such a contest. I cannot, of course, expect you to allow me a reply in your columns.

But on a personal matter I appeal to you in fairness for a correction. Your reviewer writes, "Prebendary Wace is accused of 'half scepticism,' and is warned that a Bible

of this kind 'affords no ground for faith.' This distresses me. If your reviewer had done me the honour of reading my book, he would not have misrepresented me on this, as on various other points. I presume that in his hurried glance through its pages he inadvertently connected Dr. Wace's name with certain of my strictures upon the sceptics.—Yours, &c.,
ROBERT ANDERSON.
39, Linden Gardens, W.

[On pages 171-2 of the book I am accused of not reading I find:—

This is not in the least what people usually mean who say that the Bible merely *contains* the Word of God . . . In fact, they give to the word Inspiration "a meaning which is in great measure independent of the truth or falsehood of the writings so inspired" (Prebendary Wace, D.D., "Lex Mosaica," p. 610). Now any person of ordinary intelligence can see that a Bible of this kind affords no ground for faith . . . those who are actively engaged in the Christian ministry . . . know well that this half scepticism will not satisfy any who are alive to the great realities of "sin and righteousness and judgment."

I am sorry if I have misinterpreted Sir Robert Anderson, but I think the fault is more with his rhetoric than with my haste.—YOUR REVIEWER.]

"Bethlehem" and Mr. Redford.

SIR,—The refusal of the Examiner of Plays to licence my Nativity Play "Bethlehem" on the grounds that it is founded on events recorded in Scripture has led many to believe that the promised performances have now to be abandoned. Will you allow me to state that the Examiner's decision makes no difference whatever as regards the production of the play in London; and that it will be given to subscribers, as originally announced, from December 17th to December 23rd, at the Great Hall of the University of London, South Kensington.—Yours, &c.,

LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

OTHER LETTERS SUMMARISED: Apropos of our review of "The Bible and Modern Criticism," Mr. C. H. Minchin in the course of a pertinent letter remarks: "Sir Robert Anderson, and the school to which he belongs, are bad Protestants who, faithless to their own first principles, have set up the idol of an infallible book in place of the discarded idol of an infallible Church." Two correspondents, Mr. T. Baron Russell and Mr. H. C. Prideaux, send us interesting letters criticising the paper "What Is Grammar?" We regret we cannot find space for their arguments.—Apropos of the article "Scenery in Fiction," Mr. Cecil J. Mead-Allen submits one or two points "as apology for the treatment of scenery condemned by your critic."—Mr. Noble Raymond criticises, with much vigour, the paper by Miss Corelli in the "King and County Magazine" on "The Vulgarity of Wealth."—Referring to our note on the variations of a stanza in certain editions of FitzGerald's "Omar," Mr. Gowan quotes Mr. Heron-Allen's translation of the original Persian:—

If a loaf of wheaten bread be forthcoming,
A gourd of wine, and a thigh-bone of mutton,
And then, if thou and I be sitting in the wilderness—
That were a joy not within the power of any Sultan.

W. F. P. remarks that in the original Persian "Omar's fair friend is undoubtedly represented as sitting and not singing beside the poet."—F. J. G. also writes on this subject.—Mr. Ramsay Colles obliges with a long letter criticising our article on Fiona Macleod and Mr. W. B. Yeats. Mr. Colles's views do not happen to be ours.—Mr. Eyre Hussey sends us the usual funny letter on our note about his new novel.—Finally Mr. Algernon Ashton asks us to share his anxiety as to "what the House of Lords are going to do with the Education Bill when it reaches that assembly."

Our Weekly Competition. Result of No. 163 (New Series).

Last week we offered a prize of One Guinea for the best amateur criticism of a book on the lines of one which we quoted. We award the Prize to Mr. J. D. Anderson, 17 Blakesley Avenue, Ealing, for the following:—

The draper caters for both sexes, and at times even shows a tendency to intrude on the province of that purely masculine purveyor, the tailor. It is true that his "tailor-made" confections have an air, perhaps a false air, of being "machine-sewn." The true nature of his business appears at sale time. He sells off, to use his own language, his "remnants," and the women crowd to buy. "Remnants" are quite good, quite worth the price, but the masculine customer, somehow, does not purchase them. M. Paul Bourget's "Monique" is a delightful collection of "remnants," best criticised by the charming *mondaïnes* for whose delicate tastes its author has an inimitable sympathy.

Other criticisms follow.

We are told by Pythagoras that in Britain men ate bread from the ripe corn within two hours of gathering—that the processes of reaping, threshing, grinding, kneading, and baking could be compressed into one rancoon. Compare with this our modern method: wheat brought from overseas, distributed by the varied agencies of civilization, whitened, refined, adulterated mechanically, is twisted into curious shapes, till the product in the confectioner's window is a thing of exquisite delicacy and whiteness, containing, nevertheless, the least possible nourishment, unlike the coarser but infinitely more wholesome prehistoric wheat-cake. Such is the difference between the masterpieces of fiction and the novels of Mr. W. D. Howells. "A Chance Acquaintance" is the product of modern life, bleached, refined, enervated, wire-drawn emotionally, almost emasculated by passing through the complex consciousness of a superior Bostonian littérateur, and therefore lacking in the vital force that characterizes "Vanity Fair."

[M. I. E., Lampeter.]

Few things, perhaps, in the way of entertainment, owe so much of their attractiveness to the faithful presentation of petty detail as the picture produced by the American Biograph. The interest attached to a glimpse of a popular monarch or soldier hero is greatly enhanced by the life-like distinctiveness of the waving hats and fluttering handkerchiefs through which he passes. And, to the lover of books, what spectacle can exceed in fascination the minutely-detailed progress of a man's mind through the busy days and nights of an eventful life? But we can recall but one single instance of an author having so far freed himself from the trammels of self-consciousness as to produce an unblurred impression of the scene. Written in secret and intended for no eyes but the writer's own, what book approaches so nearly the vivid realism of the Biograph as the *Diary of Samuel Pepys*?

[A. D. H., London.]

In olden times, the St. Andrews' swing was recognised as all that was desirable in golf. It was full, free, graceful, natural. Then it fell on evil days. The swing was curtailed. The forearm was brought into play. In the stroke, there was less sweep and more of the blow. Yet style did not give place entirely to muscle. That was reserved for the last stage of all. What driving piles is for the woodman, that did golf become for the many. The hardest hitter seemed the finest player. Beauty, ashamed, hid its face. Strength in all its ugliness was like to rule. As it is in golf, so it is in literature: and that Hercules holds the sceptre is proved by the success of "The House with the Green Shutters" by the late Mr. George Douglas.

[*"Omega," Dunblane.*]

Competition No. 164 (New Series).

The following note appears in the imaginary literary gossip in which "Punch" occasionally indulges:—

"The statement published by a contemporary that the first sentence of Mr. Henry James's forthcoming novel is to be serialised in America, and will run for a year in the pages of a popular magazine there, is not wholly correct. The sentence, being somewhat shorter than usual, will appear in six monthly instalments only."

This week we offer a prize of One Guinea for the best literary gossip-paragraph on these lines concerning any living writer. Length not to exceed seventy-five words.

RULES.

Answers, addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery Lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, 12 November, 1902. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the second page of Wrapper, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.

[For SPECIAL COMPETITION see next page.]

8 November, 1902.

SPECIAL COMPETITION.

We offer a prize of Two Guineas for the best *Tale* suitable for *Reading Aloud To a Child*. The successful *Tale* will be published in our Christmas number on December 6th. The *Tales*, which must not exceed 1,200 words in length, must reach this office on or before Friday, November 14th, marked outside "Special Competition." No manuscript will be returned to the author unless it be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The name and address of the writer should be written on the back of the last page of the manuscript. Each story must be accompanied by Four Special Competition Coupons cut from the issues of THE ACADEMY for October 18th, 25th, November 1st, and November 8th. If the stories are found to be of sufficient merit, it is proposed, with the consent of the authors, to publish a selection of them in a volume.

New Books Received.

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

Denney (James), The Death of Christ.....	(Hodder & Stoughton) 6 0
Aquinas (Saint Thomas), An Apology for the Religious Orders	(Sands) net 6 0
Zimmer (Heinrich), The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland.....	(Nutt) net 3 6
Ramsay (W. M.), The Education of Christ.....	(Hodder & Stoughton) 2 6
McWilliam (Rev. Thomas), Speakers for God	(Aitken) 5 0
Russell (Earl), Lay Sermons	(Burleigh) 2 6
Holah (J. P.), The Gospel Manuscripts	(Brimley Johnson) net 1 9
Oakesmith (John), The Religion of Plutarch.....	" " net 5 0

POETRY, CRITICISM AND BELLES LETTRES.

Pinero (Arthur W.), Iris : A Drama in Five Acts	(Heinemann) 1 6
Waller (Edmund), Some Songs and Verses	(Pear Tree Press) 5 0
Barker (Amelia M.), Forty Fancies and Seven Songs	(Drane) 1 0
Reprinted from "The New Age," Songs of the Veld and Other Poems	(New Age Press) net 1 0
A Garland of Love : A Collection of Posy-Ring Mottoes	(Humphreys) net 3 6
Mathew (John), Australian Echoes	(Melville) net 2 6
Author of "Essays in Paradox," Auto Da Fé and other Essays	(Longmans) 5 0
Waddington (Samuel), Collected Poems	(Bell) net 5 0
Berridge (Jesse), The Sonnets of a Platonist	(Brimley Johnson) net 3 6
Santayana (George), A Hermit of Carmel and Other Poems	" " net 6 0

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

Roscoe (E. S.), Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford	(Methuen) 7 6
Peel (Hon. George), The Enemies of England	(Arnold) net 12 6
Gordon (Oscar), The Old Bailey and Newgate	(Unwin) net 21 0
Hartley (C. Gascoigne), Stories of Early British Heroes	(Dent) net 4 6
Hadden (Cuthbert), The Master Musicians : Haydn	(Dent) net 3 6
Players of the Day, Part I	(Newnes) net 0 7
Wright (Arnold), and Smith (Philip), Parliament, Past and Present	(Hutchinson) net 0 7
Bowen (Rev. The Hon. W. E.), Edward Bowen	(Longmans) net 12 6
Fyfe (H. Hamilton), Arthur Wing Pinero	(Greening) 3 6
Journal of Edward Ellerker Williams	(Mathews) net 3 6

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

International Catalogue of Scientific Literature : Physiology	(Harrison) 21 0
Walsh (Walter), The Moral Damage of War	(Brimley Johnson) net 3 6

JUVENILE.

Schleik (Prof. H.), Mediæval Stories	(Sands) 5 0
Metcalf (W. Charles), Billows and Bergs	(Warne) 5 0
Stanway (K.), The White Prince : or, the Stolen Roses	(Drane) 3 6
Ashton (Ross), The Naughty Adventures of "Face," "Rope," and "Carrotty"	(Sands) 1 6
Gus Dirk's Picture Book	(Henderson) 1 0
Orr (Stewart), and Brymer (John), Two Merry Mariners	(Blackie) 6 0
Brereton (Captain F. S.), One of the Fighting Scouts	" 5 0
Henty (G. A.), The Treasure of the Incas	" 5 0
" The Lion of St. Mark	" 3 6
Stead (B.), Grik will Tell	" 2 6
Pollard (Eliza F.), For the Red Rose	" 2 6
March (Eleanor), Little White Barbara	(Richards) 1 6
Reynolds (Mrs. Fred), The Hut on the Island	(Gall & Inglis) 2 0
Vallinga (J. F.), The Severing Sword	" 2 0
Cecil (Hon. Mrs. Evelyn), Children's Gardens	(Macmillan) 6 0
Hall (Conrad), The Story of a Little Coloured Coon	(Hodder & Stoughton) 1 6
Somerville (Ralph), The Good Girls' and Bad Boys' Alphabet	" " 1 6
Hill (Langdon), The Adventures of a Monkey on a Stick	" " 1 6
Towers (Alton), A Child's Esop	" " 1 6

MISCELLANEOUS.

Various Authors, Latter Day Parables	(Brimley Johnson) net 1 0
Kiddle (Mrs. John), A.B.C. of Cookery for Invalids	(Drane) 1 0
Bell (Mrs.), A.B.C. of Housekeeping	" 1 0
Adlao (F. G.), The Sports of the World, Part I	(Cassell) net 0 7
The XXth Century Citizen's Atlas, Part 26	(Newnes) net 0 6
Phin (John), The Shakespeare Cyclopedia and New Glossary	(Kegan Paul) 6 0
Walsh (David), Age and Old Age	(Everett) 2 6
Macmillan (Hugh), The Poetry of Plants	(Isbister) 6 0

NEW EDITIONS.

O'Brien (Donat Henchy), My Adventures during the Late War, 1804-14	(Arnold) 7 6
Smith (Walter C.), Poetical Works (Collected Edition)	(Dent) 7 6
Barrie (J. M.), My Lady Nicotine	(Hodder & Stoughton) 2 6
Ainsworth (Harrison), The Fitch of Bacon	(Gibbings) 2 6
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